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FOVRTIE ARTICLES IN THE HIGH COVRT OF PARLIAMENT, against *William Lang*, who was Vicar in the Parish of *Bradworthy*, in the County of *Devon*, but now prisoner in the City of LONDON.

WITH

A Petition to the Right Honorable House of *Commons*, shewing the odiousnesse of his life and actions, desiring that his triall may not be prolonged, nor his Execution hindred, being one of the late Tribe of *Lordly Bishops*.

LONDON,
Printed for *Tho. Bates* in the Old Bayley.
1641.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes, aſſembled in the *Commons* Houſe this preſent *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of *Robert Judd*, for and on the behalf of himſelf, and the reſt of the Pariſhioners of *Bradworthie* in the County of *Devon*.

Humbly ſhewing to this Honorable Aſſembly; That one William Lang, *Clerke, Vicar of the Pariſh of Bradworthie aforeſaid, having for about* 16. *yeers laſt paſt grievouſly vexed his pariſhioners with infinite vexations and cauſeleſſe ſuits, to their exceeding great oppreſſions, and to the ruine and undoings of many of them, and lived with great diſhonour to God, and ſcandall to the Miniſterie, He the ſaid* Lang *being guiltie of ſymonie, Common Barretrie, forgerie, practiſing to poyſon ſome, and endeavouring to kill others of his Pariſhioners, with many other foule and groſſe miſdemeanors, particularly ſet forth, and expreſſed in the paper hereunto annexed, the conſideration whereof is hereby moſt humbly preſented to this Honorable Aſſemblie.*

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JUNE 1, 1916

Fourtie

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Fourtie Articles exhibited againſt *William Lang*, humbly preſented unto the High Court of PARLIAMENT.

1. THat the ſaid *Lang* lived till he was about the age of 30. yeers, by day labour, and daily hedged, ditched, threſhed, and carried ſand, in the ſame Pariſh and places adjacent, being never admitted of any Vniverſitie.

2. That then he became a Sheriffes Bayliffe, and arreſted divers in his own perſon.

3. That about 20. yeers ſince he forged ſeverall Warrants, and the Juſtices of Aſſizes having notice thereof, gave order for his apprehenſion, whereupon he fled into *Ireland*.

4. That about 4. yeers after he returned, and pretended he had taken Orders in *Ireland*, and did officiate as a hirelings Reader, untill by *Cary* Biſhop of *Exeter* he was ſuſpended for foule miſdemenors.

5. That he procured his Vicarage of *Bradworthy* for money, by unlawfull Symonie, by the meanes of one *Robert Tee*, who being demanded by ſome

had [illegible] friends, that if his [illegible] could but [illegible] he could [illegible] Vicar of that place.

6. That the ſaid *Lang* being deſirous to be licenced to preach, and being conſcious of his own inſufficiencie [illegible] examination, procured one *Nicholas* [illegible] to be [illegible] uſed for him by the name of *William Lang*, and ſo goes for a preaching Miniſter.

7. That ever ſince he hath been Vicar, he hath taken upon him to be a common [illegible] of cauſes in the Courts at *Weſtminſter*, and [illegible] *London* Tearmly, and taken money for Sollicitations.

8. That he hath commenced [illegible] ſuits againſt his Pariſhioners in the Courts of *Star-Chamber*, the Court of *High Commiſſion*, the Court of *Audience*, the County Court of *Devon*, and the Conſiſtory Court at *Exeter*, all at once, and hath had above fourtie ſeverall Suits at one time, and above eightie of his Pariſhioners and others in ſuite at one time, and having by vexatious ſuits utterly undone divers of them, their wives and children.

9. That he hath had 4. Bills in the *Star-Chamber* depending at one time againſt fourty of his Pariſhioners, whereof ſome have depended 12. yeers, and thereby compelled his Pariſhioners to travell to *London*, tearmely from *Bradworthie*, being two hundred miles diſtant.

10. That he never brought any of their Cauſes to hearing in the *Star-Chamber*, but after they have

been

[illegible] his own Cauſes to be [illegible] tion, whereby his miſdemeanors have eſcaped unpuniſhed.

11 That he uſually hath ſerved his Pariſhioners with paper Tickets, of his own making, into the Court of Star Chamber, and High Commiſſion, and exhibited neither Articles nor Bill againſt them.

12 That divers of his Pariſhioners have ſeverall times been enforced to give compoſitions to him, whereof ſome have payed to him fourty pounds, ſome ten, ſome foure pounds, ſome leſſe, at his pleaſure to redeem them from oppreſſion, and cauſeleſſe ſuits.

13 That he hath proſecuted *Nicholas Eliot* with unjuſt and cauſeleſſe Suits this 20. yeers and upward, to his damage above 500. l. and hath utterly undone him his wife, and children, and hath kept him excommunicate for theſe 2. yeers laſt paſt.

14 That he hath of meere malice without any juſt cauſe utterly undone *Robert Judd*, his wife and children, by taking wrongfully from him his lands and goods, to the value of above 500. l. not leaving him worth one mouthfull of bread; And in this his extreme povertie did (in a moſt unchriſtian and cruell manner) caſt into priſon the ſaid *Robert Judd*, and excommunicated him theſe 8. yeers laſt paſt; and the ſaid *Judd* doth ſtill ſtand unabſolved, notwithſtanding there is no cauſe againſt him. Nor did his malice ceaſe there, but he hath proſecuted the children of the ſaid *Robert Judd* moſt unjuſtly to their impriſonment and ruine alſo.

15 That he having about 6. or 7. yeers ſince agreed with *Anthony Nicholl*, one of his pariſhioners, for 10. s. *per annum*, in liew of the Tithes of his Tenement, did notwithſtanding ſhortly after ſue the ſaid *Nicholl*, and threaten him alſo unleſſe he would give him 20. s. *per annum*, and 5. l. for ſo quiet a compoſition he would make him ſpend more yeerly than the rent of his Tenement, and ſo forced *Nicholl* to a new agreement, and gave him a note under his hand, that for 20. s. *per annum* it was agreed betwixt them from 5. yeers to 5. yeers, during their lives if *Nicholl* ſo pleaſed: yet 2. yeers after the datte

worth yeerly, whereupon the ſaid *Nichol* being unable to travell to *Exeter*, to prevent excommunication, and being threatened with the High Commiſſion Court, yeelded to give whatſoever he demanded.

16 That for three pence (which was all he demanded, and which was tendred to him) he ſued *Richard Seyer* in the Conſiſtorical *Exeter*, and put him to [illegible].

17 That he cauſed *Samuel Chappell* to be [illegible] in the ſuit of *Andrew Speed*, who diſavowed the Suit.

18 That he uſed the name of *Gabriel Williams* of *Teryton* in the Court of High Commiſſion to informe againſt his Pariſhioners, and gave money to the ſaid *Williams* to countenance the ſaid Articles.

19 That *William Long* ſerved letters miſſive upon *William Cawn*, *John Biſhop*, *Richard Lile*, *Lewis Deeman*, *Robert Tegdrew*, *John Yee*, and when he could not prevail with them to give him compoſition for to ceaſe the ſuit, he uſed meanes to the Examiner *Greenhill*, that upon their appearance they could not be examined for 7. weeks, and at laſt foure of them were forced to give 30. s. a peece to be examined. Which cauſe lay dead almoſt a yeer, then they moving to be diſmiſt with coſts, Vicar *Long* ſerved them with Proceſſe never ſeen in Court to bring in their Anſwers: whereupon they came, and produced the Proceſſe, which were *Longs* own hand writing; whereupon the Examiner being Clark, confeſſed he did it at *Longs* [illegible]. So the Court fined *Greenhill* 20 s. But *Long* eſcaped unpuniſhed, or reproved.

20 That he hath lately got himſelf made an Officer (by ſome unjuſt way as is conceived) of purpoſe to vex and oppreſſe his Pariſhioners with cauſeleſſe Suits in the Stannery Court, and hath already done ſo.

21 That he hath affirmed, that if his Chancell were full of gold and ſilver, he would ſpend it all to be revenged of his enemies, and that he would never give over his Pariſhioners with ſuits, untill he lay down like the Hare before the hounds.

22 That

mitted, which *Pegſley* attempted three times. And beſides there is more then ſuſpicion, that he poyſoned his predeceſſors wife, whoſe eſtate he had, and was tied to maintain her for the ſame during her life.

23 That the ſaid *Long* did conſpire the death of his predeceſſor Mr. *Twiggs*, and in all probability poyſoned his widow dying ſuddenly, whoſe eſtate he had, and was bound to maintain her during his life, for to that purpoſe the ſaid *Long* procured a Potion as can be proved.

24 That he carried a Piſtall to kill Mr. *Thomas Vigures*, one of his Pariſhioners, and there in ſuit with him, and did threaten *Thomas Woodroffe* a Miniſter, who revealed the ſame to the ſaid *Thomas Vigures*, that unleſſe he would deny before a Juſtice the words that he had told *Thomas Vigures*, he would lay Felonie to his charge, and his man *Jewell* ſhould ſweare it.

25 That he dealt with the aforenamed *Pegſley* to burne the Barn and Corn-mowes of *Samuell Chappell* one of his Pariſhioners, and at that time in ſuit with him.

26 That he hath committed divers forgeries ſince he hath been Vicar of *Bradworthie*.

27 That he farmeth the Tythes of two Pariſhes, to the great oppreſſion of the Inhabitants, in forcing them to pay much more then formerly they did, for fear of Law ſuits, and London journeys.

28 That he hath left his Cure to follow Suits, whereby there hath been neither Sermons nor Service in the Pariſh Church, many times for a moneth together. And in his abſence above 7. years ſince, he left *Matthew Lile* a Miller, and uſing that Trade, and no Miniſter to read prayers in the Church, who hath ſeverall times by his appointment publiquely read Divine Service in the Church there; And ſince that *Philip Hart* a Taylor hath by the appointment of *Long*, and in his abſence publiquely read Divine Service as well on the Sabbath as other holy dayes.

29 That he cauſeth *Dorothy Long* his daughter to churchiſe

the

the Pariſhioners publiquely in the Church, which ſhe hath done ſeverall Sundayes together by the appointment of the ſaid *William Lang*.

30 That he being required to baptize a childe, bade the woman that required him to caſt a diſh of water in the face of it, and call it *John* or *Joane* (as it was) in the name of the Father, &c. and that would be well enough. Which childe lived nine or ten weeks after, and died unbaptized.

31 That he obtained licence to ſell wine, and hath kept a Tavern in the Vicaradge houſe for 4. yeers laſt paſt.

32 That a childe being at the Font to be baptized, the woman that held the childe ſoftly and modeſtly asking the ſaid *Lang* whether ſhe ſhould put back the childs head-clothes, he anſwered, Go thy wayes home, and teach thy maid to whip her Cat.

33 That the ſaid *Lang* being requeſted by one of his Pariſhioners to chriſten his childe, anſwered him thus, What wilt thou have me to chriſten thy old Sow.

34 That the ſaid *Lang* cauſed the Body of *Roger Noke* of his Pariſh deceaſed to be kept unjuſtly ten dayes unburied, and the ſame to ſtand open two Sabbath dayes to the great annoyance and grief of his Pariſhioners.

35 That the ſaid *Lang* doth affirm that the Book of *Canticles* in the old Teſtament was but a kind of bawdy Song, *My Love, my Dove, my faire one, &c.*

36 That the ſaid *Lang* ſaid in a Sermon, that the holy Ghoſt was a created corporall ſubſtance, or words to that effect.

37 That the ſaid *Lang* went up into the Pulpit, and told them he was not able to diſcharge the Office of a Miniſter amongſt them, becauſe the people were ſo ſinfull, and that God had ſent him for a ſcourge amongſt them.

38 That the ſaid *Lang* doth make infamous Libels againſt his pariſhioners, to their great ſcandall and unjuſt vexations.

39 That he never preacheth or catechiſeth in the afternoon on Sabbath dayes, but goes conſtantly to the Alehouſe, and makes himſelf ſo drunk, that he could not go nor ſtand.

40 That the ſaid *Lang* doth uſually ſerve Writs and Citations upon his pariſhioners upon the dayes of Eaſter and other generall Communions, which he might conveniently [illegible] the week day with [illegible] breach of charitie.

FINIS.